



HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

An electronic newsletter in support of public safety services in Montana

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IM Weekly Highlights



- IM staffers Roger Smith and Dave Clouse completed final site walks for microwave installations at the South Moccasin, Garneill and Cooney sites.
- Brian Sewell, IM Project Manager, met with National Guard and the contractor to review and approve design details for installations of last-mile microwave hops.
- IM representatives will meet with Harris-Stratex next Thurs., Jan. 28 in Helena at 9:00 am to review and discuss the Northern Tier microwave acceptance plan. The call-in number is (877) 876-1232 and PIN is 4066609956.
- IM is hiring a Communications Systems Planner to support local partners in developing and implementing communications system plans as well as to provide technical assistance to system users. For more information, visit:
http://interop.mt.gov/staffing_sub-committee.mcp

IM Finance Meeting Informative

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

IM Finance Committee (IMFC) members held an instructive meeting in Helena on Mon., Jan. 11. Sheriff John Walsh, IM Finance Committee Chair, began the meeting with funding reports, and members reviewed an overview of all funding sources. A correction is being made to the report to eliminate COPS 06 funds, because they were not spent on the IM project. Members also reviewed the latest IM budget, which is reconciled through the end of June. Questions regarding the status of grant extensions are being directed to DES.

Bob Murdo, IM Legal Counsel, updated the group on the IRS application for the IM to be recognized as a 501-C-4 organization. Several Decision/Information Requests (DIRs) were reviewed and approved to move forward to the IM Project Directors. The committee received an update on the status of the Motorola 12-Site Contract and the PSIC and COPS grants.

Carl Hotvedt, Public Safety Services Bureau

(PSSB), told members that certain executive branch state agencies were requested to come up with plans detailing how they would cut 5% of their general fund budgets. In addition, out-of-state travel already has been significantly decreased.

Larry Irwin, Montana Highway Patrol (MHP), reported that the MHP now has four full-time radio technicians working for it, located in Billings, Helena and Missoula. Plans are to move forward on narrowbanding and repeater replacement projects. He plans to work closely with Kevin regarding training opportunities.

The date, time and location for the next IMFC meeting will be announced.

Productive IM Project Directors Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

IM Project Directors held a productive meeting in Helena on Tues., Jan. 12, beginning with the Executive Director report by Kevin Bruski. He updated participants on grants, sites, outreach and planning. Sheriff John Walsh reported on the IM Finance Committee meeting and Irene Bushnell, Anderson ZurMuehlen, distributed funding and budget reports. The board approved several Decision/Information Requests (DIRs) and received updates on the PSIC and COPs grants.

Ian Marquand, Outreach and Public Affairs Consultant, presented the newest version of the IM video. He also distributed copies of the IM Progress Report.

Dave McPherson, Audit Committee Chair, introduced Erika Morris, Anderson ZurMuehlen, the technical advisor to the committee. She reviewed some of the committee's responsibilities, including the main goal of appointing and overseeing the work of an independent annual auditor. Joe Brenneman, Flathead County, announced the formation and meeting details of the MACo Interoperability Committee.

Wing Spooner, PSSB, solicited input on the Interoperable Emergency Communications Grant Program (IECGP) and reported on Technical Assistance requests made to the Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) last Sept.

Board members made plans to hold the Blueprint for Excellence Training in lieu of regular IM Finance and Governance meetings this spring and decided not to plan for an event in conjunction with the DES conference in April. In other business,

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the IM Project Directors adopted an annual meeting schedule.

Kyle Hilmer, ITSD - Policy and Planning Services Bureau Chief, gave an update on work being performed on the IM Business Plan, and indicated that core costs have been identified as well as those associated with building a green site. He educated the group about various components of a business plan, including identifying infrastructure, customers, mix of services, staffing, and funding streams.

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Roger Smith, IM Radio System Administrator, gave a status report on IM infrastructure, trunking, fleet mapping and the network. Scott Bradford, Frequency Sub-Committee chair, provided an update on frequencies and reported on the PSSB internal audit of state frequency licenses. Mark Canton, Motorola, reported that the 7.6 trunking upgrade is complete. Work on the Helena Dispatch Center is scheduled for early February.

Dale Osborne, Encryption Sub-Committee chair, reported that a waiver process has begun in order to postpone significant investments that would be needed to upgrade to the new Advance Encryption Standard (AES) standard. Brian Sewell, IM Project Manager, provided an update on the Montana National Guard last-mile hop project and indicated that the project is on schedule. Construction is supposed to start in early February.

Please note that the next IMPD meeting has been rescheduled to Tues., March 9, while the Blue Print for Excellence training is now set for April 12 and 13.

SCMIC Consortium Meets in Livingston

By E. Wing Spooner espoonser@mt.gov

The South Central Montana Interoperability Consortium (SCMIC) met in Livingston on Wed., Jan. 13. Each member reported on activities within his or her county. Myer's Flat is experiencing generator problems that are covered by warranty. Park County is also updating its radio inventory. Madison County has agreed to clear the road to V.C. Pass, so the tower and shelter can be installed. The Sierra site will be finished this spring. Meagher County's new phone and mapping system is up and running.

A road, tower and shelter are now in place at the Greycliff site in Sweet Grass County. Frank Smith reported that Gallatin County's T-1 problems have been resolved through Motorola, and the new 9-1-1 center was re-connected to the Master

Controller in Helena the week before Christmas. Fleet mapping training in Bozeman is to be held this Feb. or March.

Project Director Kerry O'Connell gave an update on the IM Project Director's meeting from the previous day. She reported that Carter County Sheriff Rusty Jardee is working with the Sustainability Sub-Committee, and she solicited reactions to his funding ideas and asked that members obtain additional feedback within their county governments.

Peggy Glass reported on the IM Finance Committee, and emphasized the importance of making sure invoices are correct before forwarding them to IM. She noted that an invoice incorrectly stated it was for maintenance instead of installation, and payment was denied, since grant funds cannot pay for maintenance. She also reported that the Motorola maintenance contract was extended for three months, and funds have been allocated to purchase IM monitoring and alarm equipment.

The next SCMIC meeting will be held on April 14, in Big Timber, beginning at 10:00 am.

Upcoming Meetings

- **Mon., Jan. 25**

IM Technical Committee (IMTC)

Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

MACo Large Conference Rm., 2715 Skyway Drive

- **Tues., Jan. 26**

State Agency Radio Users Task Force

Helena • 9:00 am - 11:00 pm

Mitchell Building, 125 N. Roberts, Room 160

- **Wed., Jan. 27**

Statewide Interoperable Executive Council (SIEC)

Helena • 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

State Capitol, Room 152

- **Wed., Jan. 27 - No Eastern Tier Meeting**

Please note: The next ETIC meeting is March 24

- **Thurs., Jan. 28**

Big Sky 11 Consortium

Billings • 10:00 am - noon

Billings Police Dept. Training Center, 4810 Midland Rd.

- **Tues., Feb. 2**

Funding Sub-Committee Meeting

Billings • 1:00 pm

Billings Police Dept. Training Center, 4810 Midland Rd.

- **Tues., Feb. 2**

IM Outreach Presentation

White Sulphur Springs • 1:30 pm

Meagher County Courthouse, 15 West Main St.

- **Thurs., Feb. 4**

IM Outreach Presentation

Chippewa-Cree Business Committee • 9:00 am

Rocky Boy's Reservation, Tribal Headquarters

RR1, Box Elder